

and associated equipment, and provide expert assistance;

**The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan** is one of the best-known activities of the Commonwealth Secretariat, offers students academic exchange and research opportunities. More than 10,000 students from Canada and other Commonwealth countries have received awards since the plan was established in 1959;

**The Unit for the Promotion of Human Rights** promotes respect for human rights through education, training and information; and

**The Unit for the Improvement of the role and place of Women in Economic and Social Development** promotes women's equality and recommends measures to give women full and effective rights to land, finance and other resources. It also recommends ways to ensure a more equitable sharing not only of the costs but also of the rewards and benefits of economic adjustment measures;

The Commonwealth also undertakes major studies on issues such as economic and trade relations between rich and poor member countries; sports; human rights; the situation of women.

### *Other examples of major Commonwealth activities*

The Commonwealth has played a leading role in directing longstanding and concerted international pressure on South Africa to dismantle apartheid - or racial segregation -, and bring about a peaceful transition to a multi-racial, democratic system of government.

The Commonwealth promotes a greater commitment to women's equality through the regular meetings of the Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers. At their meeting in Ottawa in 1990, the Ministers agreed to a **Declaration on Women and Structural Adjustment** which called on all international organizations lending money to Third World countries to consider the impact of their proposals for economic reform on women.

Through the **Commonwealth Games**, one of its most widely known events, and the **Commonwealth Arts Festival**, which takes place in conjunction with the Games, the Commonwealth promotes contacts between the people of its member countries. The Games and the Arts Festival also demonstrate the spirit of Commonwealth friendship and multi-racialism. The next Games will be held in Victoria, B.C. in 1994;

The Commonwealth is also involved in a number of other initiatives such as:

**The Special Fund for Mozambique**, even though Mozambique is not a member of the Commonwealth, the decision to provide assistance was made to demonstrate solidarity with a country surrounded by Commonwealth neighbours and which is a cornerstone in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

**The Langkawi Scholarship Program**, named after the Malaysian city where it was created, this program provides scholarships to government officials and other experts in the environment field to help them learn from the experience of other Commonwealth countries.

**The Small States Facility**. Created to help small Commonwealth countries - mostly island states in the South Pacific, the Indian Ocean and the Carribean - to obtain permanent representation at the United Nations.

### *How does the Commonwealth work?*

Since 1965, the Commonwealth has had an international Secretariat with headquarters in London, United Kingdom. Its staff is made up of people from all over the Commonwealth.

The Secretariat implements the decisions of Heads of Government in the political, economic and social spheres. It also organizes meetings and conferences that bring people from Commonwealth countries together to plan and carry out agreed programs.